

*The pencil marks
are numerous when
I have used this
at meetings
you observe —*

C O P Y .

17 Park Avenue,

Skipton

1.11.17

Dear Miss Rushton,

Thank you very much for your letter this morning. I will try to help you all I can by telling you as much as I can about Miss Mason's method of education. To begin with, it was an entirely new way of teaching to me when I began at Inge Council School here in the town, for ours is the only school in the town where the P.N.E.U. is taught, and as they, down at school, did not really understand its aims and had very few books, you may guess we began in a very half-hearted manner. However Miss Mason herself invited the teachers from the various schools taking her method, to a kind of Conference at Ilkley a year ago last September, when we met Miss Ambler and her Staff and many other enthusiasts, and we all came home as keen as mustard to do our best with the new system, and since then we have improved wonderfully, (until yesterday, when the Hon. Mrs. Franklin came from London to make notes of every little point in our work so she could report to Miss Mason herself on the work in the different schools, she actually said our school was, if anything, better than Drighlington and she could n't understand why some of their visitors (and they have had about

180 this year) did not come to us to see how we teach Miss Mason's Method. (Mind, she was the most thorough visitor, interested, we have had, and her eyes took in every single thing on walls and in rooms, and her ears missed nothing either.)

Well, to begin with the reading matter, I believe you have all the necessary pamphlets we have at school, we have Miss Mason's 3/6 volume on "Home Education" which is full of fine matter regarding child-life, you shall see it when you come to visit. We all find it a delightful way of teaching and the children enjoy it no end, besides which I really believe it is going to be the coming way. No poring over half a dozen text books preparing a lesson and possibly missing a few points out and incidentally putting a few in to fill up time, no! we write no notes of lessons at all. Miss Mason sends us from Ambleside every term and her Programme (she won't call it a syllabus) for the next term and the P.N.E.U. have spent anxious hours in choosing the very best possible books and when you have these necessary books and Programmes, you are ready for the fray. I need not say the books are delightful even for grown-ups and the kiddies listen most attentively and it is really wonderful how much they remember when they come out to narrate. I have Standard IV and a lower V so mine write what I read or what they themselves read, for Composition and so I test mine as to what they have remembered. We begin with it with the 6 year olds, so it would be quite right to take it with your sixes and Standard I. This is what we do all through the school, we choose the part set in the programme and see about how

many pages fall to each lesson during the term and then begin to read. We read it once only with as much expression as possible, (I know I make a perfect ass of myself so the kiddies enjoy it). I took Marley's Ghost from Christmas Carol (when Mrs. Franklin was in and she thanked me herself. she had enjoyed it so,) and the kiddies- well, you could have heard less than a pin drop. I hope they didn't dream, for it really was wierd. However, that is by the way, still if you make the story live for them you get better attention and hence better narration which is what you are after. Then when you have read it you bring various children out to tell what they remember of the story and we, at the end of the lesson (although I don't really think we ought according to Miss Mason) just go over the various points so the children have a correct impression left with them, lest some little tot has led them astray in facts. That is all we do except the big ones write instead of narrate. Their aim is to educate a child so it shall know good books, other than Chambers and Blackies, something that they have to climb up to not mince all the matter and put it in their mouths and really, it is a fact that the children do enjoy these books no end. Standard I takes "Pilgrim's Progress" and Tales from Troy and Greece (not an abridged edition) and they yarn about Autolycus and Ulysses and Perseus and Andromeda &c. as though they were the best of pals. Then Our Island Story (7/6) is the History Book and Ambleside Geography I and the World at Home, a delightful book, is used for Geography and a Bird Book and Tommy Smith's Animals I believe, are the Nature Books. Then we are doing $\frac{1}{2}$ dozen of Watts' pictures

this term for picture talk so we have lots to do. Our upper standards take more advanced books such as Arnold Forster's English History, First History of France, Ambleside Geog. books ii and iii and Round the Empire and Unbeaten Tracks in Japan for top class. The Life of Lord Kitchener and Christmas Carol for Literature, and the Nature is very difficult (I told Mrs. F. that I didn't like these books at all, they are far too difficult when you have nothing to work experiments or show specimens) The Sciences (Holdens) all about Chemistry, that really needs experiments, and Life and Her Children all about deep sea shells creatures, and sea cucumbers, things I've never seen or heard of myself. Glimpses into Plant Life, the other Nature Book is very decent! Can you make head or tale of this rambling epistle? My late partner used to say my letters were full of "d— rot", and I guess if he read this he might be justified. Still I've done my best to let you see exactly what we do and how we do it and anything else you would like to know I will be only too glad to tell you if I am able. We felt bucked up no end after Mrs. Franklin's report, to think that we may actually climb somewhere near Brighlington, well its a feather in our cap and no mistake.

Any day you can visit us will be quite all right, if you let us have a card. We do no show work at our place whoever comes (to tell the truth we've none to do, it takes us all our time to get through what is set) so we shall just do ordinary work so you will see it as it actually is. The kiddies were angels yesterday though as a rule they are jolly black ones, still I musn't complain for they really were good when our important and influential visitor

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was with us.)

Well I guess I'll stop now. We creep up to bed at
nine.

Yours sincerely

(signed) Sallie Edmondson Bargh

Girls' School.

Painswick.

Stroud.

9th February, 1916.

Dear Miss Kitching,

I shall be very pleased for Miss Mason to use any of my paper that would suit her purpose.

I see in one of the papers that a reporter said that I quoted "90% of the girls from Gloucestershire went into domestic service. What I said was 90% of our girls went into domestic service - "our girls" being Painswick girls.

Kindly tell Miss Mason I received her kind letter and will reply at length to it when I possibly can.

We had a Secondary Schoolmaster in to see our work and the girls on Monday. (He had walked 11 miles to see us). He hailed from below London.

He was so pleased with the girls and the work, that he is presenting the school library with a copy of "English Literature" 7/6.

The girls are delighted to think that they may soon be able to take the book home in turn.

We are getting on very well indeed with the scheme. The teachers and the girls like it better every day. We are

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all very happy in the work.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

Marie Kirkland.

NOTES ON A
LIBRARY - PUBLICATION
FROM ALL

Convent of Mercy of the
Immaculate Conception,
Waterford.

18th February, 1918.

My dear Miss Kitching,

Your dear letter has indeed brought all our Staff great courage. Will you kindly convey to dear Miss Mason our most sincere thanks for her very kind and sweet appreciation... another proof of the kindness of that great piece of human nature she has got.

We have been living in wonder and astonishment here over what we call "Miss Mason's discovery". Her system is really a philosophy and we feel it will revolutionize the educational world when it becomes known properly. As for our little attempt, though so imperfect, yet the Staff is so charmed with the work that for anything they would not go back to old methods, and the children are equally charmed.

I have been saying that if I ever get to the other side of the Irish sea my first impulse would be to lock up Miss Mason and lay our hearty thanks at her feet. She certainly has our blessing and our prayers for she has opened unthought oceans of possibilities. We are ever speaking, too, of the kind courtesy and helpful spirit at all times shown to us, who must have been a real trouble during our crude beginnings.

(signed)

Yours sincerely,
S. J. de Sales.

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Education Office,
County Hall, Brecon.

19th Nov. 1921.

Mr. Edgar Williams.

Dear Sir,

With further reference to your letter, I have now had an opportunity of discussing the matter with the Adviser and Organiser, and I can only repeat that the provision made for the education of your children, as he found it, cannot be regarded as efficient.*

I shall be glad if you will send me full particulars of the arrangement for working in connection with the House of Education, Ambleside. I am sorry I do not know this method, and the pamphlet sent with your letter does not throw any light on the subject. It will also be necessary for the Teacher to submit a copy of her Time Table and Syllabus of work. If these are generally satisfactory the plan can be carried on, and the Adviser and Organiser will visit you again in the course of a month or so to examine the results. During this time the children's work should be carefully preserved for his inspection.

In the first place, however, I shall be glad if you will furnish me with the information mentioned above.

If you have any papers from Miss Mason, will you please send them to me for perusal, and I will return them in the course of a day or two.

Yours faithfully,

A. Leonard.

Secretary.

* Mr. Williams says: In reference to this the adviser when he called refused to look at the children's work or to examine books in our little schoolroom; he condemned it without knowing anything at all about it.

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To Mr. Edgar Williams.

Education Office,
Brecon.

Dear Sir,

NOV 1921

I have perused pamphlets, etc. re Parents' National Educational Union and programmes of work, time tables in connection with the home education of your children, and I shall be glad to call upon you in about a month's time to see how matters stand. It seems to me that the afternoon programme is rather heavy; there is no period of rest and the time given (3 to 3.10) to drawing, maps, etc. is inadequate. I suggest some handwork as well (including needlework) instead of some of the subject.

Yours faithfully,

W. E. Evans.

birth date
Copy.

Memorandum 26p10mc340
Saville House,
Llangammarch Wells, Wales.

16th Oct. 1922.

"Last Saturday week I had to attend the funeral of an aunt, my father's only sister, who lived near Cardiff. My cousin, her eldest son, whom I had not seen for 20 years I found, of course, a grown man. I remembered him as a little boy then attending the intermediate school at Llanelli, where he had won a scholarship. His father like mine was a tailor but had wisely allowed the boy to follow his bent, and at that time he was a real bookworm. During a little talk I had with him after the funeral, I found he had taken his degree, B Sc, before the war, during the war he joined the Navy, obtaining a commission. On his discharge he was fortunate in being appointed out of a very large number of applicants as H.M. Inspector of Schools for Glamorganshire, a post he still holds. He is a very energetic worker in everything pertaining to education in Wales, full of the enthusiasm of youth, to do great things, and from what I gather from other sources very popular with the rising generation of teachers, an all round athlete, captain of the Welsh International Hockey team, and a player of most games, withal deeply religious and of high principles; that is my impression of him, a fellow whom it was good to meet again.

During the conversation he asked after the children's education, etc. I told him we were having them taught at home under the P.H.E.U. method. Any doubt I may have felt as to whether he had any knowledge of it was soon dispelled by the reply, "You mean Miss Mason's method?" He got quite excited in the characteristically Welsh fashion, and exclaimed "Well, well, this is the very last thing I thought I should be discussing with you to-day", so I had to tell him all I had to tell; when asked as to how we came to take it up I could only answer truthfully that the thing came to me one day last October quite suddenly and that I wrote about it on the same day; we both agreed that all good things come to us in very much the same way. However, what struck us both was that we who had not met for 20 years, should be so interested in the same thing because he said "at the present time, it is taking up most of my thoughts". He then explained they had the method working in four schools in Glam., under his observation, with (his own words) "wonderful results", especially in the teaching of English literature, and nature work. "Of course I do not feel qualified to say much as yet but I have not been so interested in anything in my life." He then compared it with other methods, mentioning the "group" system, and I think he said Montessori (of which I knew nothing) but he said the chief thing is, "the children get what they have always hungered for

only we have not realised - that is books to read; we as teachers have not given the child credit for being able to comprehend them (grinding away ourselves instead of letting the child work out its own salvation)". I will not detain you by repeating all he said, but it was quite sufficient to convince me he will not rest until it is working throughout Glam., and I gathered much will depend on his report. I need not assure you, perhaps, I did not attempt any "boosting"; I am well aware the P.W.E.U. is not a patent medicine. One thing I must mention again, we both had experienced the same thing. He noticed I referred to "Miss Mason's method" when talking about it. So did he, so have all whom I have spoken to about it. And here I could not help noticing in him what I think stands out very clearly in the addresses at the Conference and in the letters of those who wrote about it afterwards, the desire to know, and hear Miss Mason speak. From what I gathered he was well acquainted with her writings, but he remarked, "Miss Charlotte Mason, what a wonderful woman she must be, how I should like to see her and to talk to her." I found myself blurting out, "Well I had that privilege last week". At which he stared at me. I then explained that I was her tailor and prevaricated by saying, "Miss Mason has been staying at the Wells," not mentioning which, remembering her injunction, a very necessary one or we shall have Llangammarch a "Mecca" for

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all the Welsh P.N.E.U. and there would be no rest for either of you.

All the way home (we went by car over the Beacon Beacons) I could think of nothing else, notwithstanding the magnificent panorama of the Beacons, that we two parted for so long, should be so engrossed in the same thing, but how I envied him his great opportunity, on which I feel sure he will seize and make good use of. Compared with him I can do so little but what little I can shall be done to the best of my ability and the time at my disposal. Quite naturally a tailor will be expected to know more about pins than education; still, sometimes it is possible for an outsider to get very interested in the game.

Possibly you may think the matter too trivial to have taken up so much of your time; even so, I know I have your forgiveness without asking for it and beg to remain

Yours sincerely,

Edgar Williams.

P.S. We have agreed to exchange notes; he in his large corner, I in my small one.

17CME340

From Edgar Williams,
Saville House, Llangamarch Wells.

21st Oct. 1922.

..... The civility of the Director's postcard after seeing the pamphlets could only be really appreciated when compared with some of the preceding ones.

I gave them to understand very clearly from the first that I was prepared to suffer anything in defence of the right to have my children taught as I thought best. But what really satisfied them was the sending of the following pamphlets, and I should advise the same thing now:-

Miss Mason's Theory.
Miss Drury's Practice.
Mr. Household's pamphlets.

Also a copy of the time-table, rules and entrance form, programmes of work, and list of books used, with a gentle hint asking them to compare the method and the books with those available in our elementary schools, notwithstanding our colossal education expenses. In my case I had to contend with a certain amount of bullying, and threats of proceedings, etc., etc., but I do not think they really meant them; and for three months this treatment went on, but I took no notice, and we kept on with the method, and I have had no difficulty since.....

signed Edgar Williams.

P.S. All this was 12 months ago. To-day's post brought an invitation from the Radnorshire Education Committee to attend a conference at Ilantrisant next week, and I hope to see the method used in Brecon and Radnor.